

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ XGDS
~~RUFF/ZARF/UMBRA~~

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT Possible Revisions in the NIE Process

The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board has recommended that the current NIE process be converted to a new three-step process:

- Production of a purely intelligence document which avoids net assessments.
- A detailed net assessment.
- A thorough critique of the net assessment by an independent entity.

A possible Presidential directive for implementation of this revision on a trial basis for two strategic issues is at Tab A. The President would like your comments on the PFIAB recommendations and the proposed trial run.

Henry A. Kissinger

NSC review completed.

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Classified by Henry A. Kissinger

ETS - 11-1-75

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE - XGDS

Draft

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Trial Modification to the NIE Process

In an effort to evaluate possible modifications to the national intelligence estimating process the President has directed that:

-- The Director of Central Intelligence establish an independent analysis group composed of Intelligence Community and non-government representatives which would produce an experimental estimate on the capability of Soviet strategic forces, independent of NIE 11-3/8-75, in the following two strategic areas:

- Anti-Submarine Warfare
- Accuracy of ICBMs

This estimate should, in those instances when factual data is limited or not available, present a complete spectrum of opposing views and alternative interpretations. In addition, gaps in knowledge critical to the assessment should be highlighted and the degree of uncertainty in key judgments described in detail.

-- The Interdepartmental Political-Military Group establish an ad hoc net assessment working group which will prepare a net assessment in the two strategic areas described above and submit its product to the Chairman of the Under Secretaries Committee;

-- The Under Secretaries Committee undertake a comparison and critique of (1) the estimate and net assessment described above; and (2) NIE 11-3/8-75 treatment of the same three areas.

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Summary

We believe that the policy-maker would be better served by an NIE which clearly identifies that which is fact and that which is judgment, and which identifies the intelligence gaps prevailing at various stages in the analytic process. The product would also be more useful if the decision-makers provided more specific guidance regarding the relevant, contemporary issues with which they are confronted, and on the most useful format for presentation of the intelligence.

Finally, Mr. President, we recommend that you direct the NSC to implement these suggestions, insofar as possible, with respect to formulation of this year's NIE on Soviet Strategic Forces which is now in progress and, as appropriate, to the national intelligence estimating process.

Respectfully,


George W. Anderson, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)
Chairman

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

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RUFF ZARF UMBRA

HANDLE VIA
TALENT-KEYHOLE-COMINT
CONTROL SYSTEMS JOINTLY

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY BOARD

15 August 1975

Dear Brent:

At the conclusion of Dr. Foster's presentation during the Board's meeting with President Ford on 8 August 1975, the President asked that we provide him as quickly as possible with a proposed directive to implement the recommendations for improving intelligence estimates and for establishing a net assessment and critique process.

Attached is a draft NSDM to accomplish these purposes on a trial basis as proposed by the Board. We have preliminarily staffed this draft with Colonel Granger.

Sincerely,



Wheaton B. Byers

Attachment: Draft NSDM

Lt. General Brent Scowcroft
Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

SECRET - XGDS-2

D R A F T

15 August 1975

SECRET - XGDS-2

National Security Decision Memorandum _____

TO: The Secretary of Defense
 The Deputy Secretary of State
 The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: National Intelligence Estimates

The President has met with his Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and received its views on the inadequacies it perceives in National Intelligence Estimate 11-3/8-74 ("Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict Through 1985"), on the process of formulating intelligence estimates, and on its suggestions for improvements.

The Board commented on the difficulties inherent in analyzing and communicating uncertainties--a principal function of intelligence--and noted that to improve the utility of intelligence estimates the process should be subjected to continuing review and experimentation. The Board observed that when factual data is limited or not available, opposing views and alternative interpretations should be given equivalent visibility in the estimates; further, that it is important to underscore the gaps in our knowledge and to detail the degree of uncertainty attendant to key judgments.

With respect to NIE 11-3/8-74, the Board noted that essential to an understanding of the potential consequences of the threat appraisal is a net assessment which should be performed by an entity that includes representatives of the Departments of State and Defense as well as the intelligence community.

The President has directed that the Board's suggestions for resolving observed deficiencies be implemented on a trial basis and, to the extent possible, in the formulation of this year's NIE on Soviet strategic forces. Specifically, it is directed that:

-- The DCI establish on an experimental basis a new competitive analysis group composed of intelligence community and private sector

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15 August 1975

representatives working parallel to the established estimating process; this group will consider a limited number of selected issues and will present the results as alternative findings in the appropriate intelligence product;

-- To initiate the foregoing, the National Security Council Intelligence Committee submit a list of the most critical intelligence issues to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs who will select three for immediate assignment to the DCI for competitive analysis;

-- The Interdepartmental Political-Military Group establish an ad hoc net assessment working group chaired by the Department of Defense; from the issues selected by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the working group will evaluate those which are amenable to the net assessment process and submit its product to the Chairman of the Under Secretaries Committee;

-- The Under Secretaries Committee initiate an independent, thorough critique of each net assessment produced, and forward the net assessment and their evaluation of the critique to the President.

The President desires to review progress towards achieving these objectives with his Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board during its October 9-10, 1975 meeting.

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